

March 12, 2022

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, distinguished members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary. My name is Jason Fredlund and I am a teacher-educator who lives in Hartford, CT and has opportunities to support educators and administrators across the state.

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of:

- [S.B. No. 387](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
- [S.B. No. 392](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

- [S.B. No. 365](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- S.B. No. 388: AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- [H.B. No. 5418](#) AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
- [H.B. No. 5417](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.
- [S.B. No. 386](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.
- [S.B. No. 16](#) AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

I am testifying in opposition to the bills I listed above because they are rooted in false claims that Connecticut is experiencing tremendously high rates of crime being committed by youth; this simply is not supported by data. This crime rhetoric is being used to cause fear and push for reforms that, in the end, will result in more Black and Brown youth and low-income white youth becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

I am not naive to the realities of crime in our state. Like many of my neighbors, I am concerned about protecting my personal property and don't wish anyone would have to deal with fear, discomfort, loss, or the sense of violation that comes from having your car stolen or rifled through. I know from personal experience that it is a deeply unpleasant experience. The bills that I am opposing—which are being falsely marketed as a “solution” to ease these fears, will **not** make us more safe, nor are they based on real data. Instead, they will result in continuing to deepen the divide between “the 2 Connecticuts” (the “haves”—disproportionately white; and the “have nots” disproportionately Black, Latinx, and Brown). These measures will not provide a solution for any issues related to crime in our state.

These reactionary measures are rooted in a false, and racist narratives, that Black and Brown youth are responsible for the mythical “rise in crime.” The data is clear that criminally punishing kids leads to higher rates of recidivism, locks youth into cycles of crime and poverty, and leads to more *unsafe* streets for all of us. The real, sustainable, opportunities to minimize crime and keep our communities safe will require us to help meet immediate needs around food, housing, health care, and education. We should NOT be wasting our financial resources on punitive measures which harm kids instead of funding initiatives that will address the root causes of community instability.

Additionally, I urge you to SUPPORT [S.B. No. 392](#) and [S.B. No. 387](#) with the recommendations submitted by the [Connecticut Justice Alliance](#). Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today and feel free to reach out if you have any further questions.

In community,
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